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/For the special use of fire during the post-partum period of recovery from childbirth, see category 846./

779 family. Babies lacking in merit died at their birth, just as mothers whose merit had run low suffered or died in childbirth.

84 A soul desiring rebirth flew into the womb of a woman at
[775] conception. By care and imitative magical practices, both
[774] parents helped the fetus grow but the mother gave the baby its
[789] body. Parturition was a joint effort of mother and child, the course and outcome of which was determined by their respective stores of merit. After delivery the child was blessed, his soul seized and tied in, and ritual means taken that he not wander from home throughout life. A post-partum rest of
846 several days was taken beside a hot fire, the purpose of which
• 392 was both physiological, i.e. to dry the uterus, and ritual, to bring about full "ripe" adulthood.

The fire, which was consecrated, strengthened a woman and made her a better nourisher, mature, more compassionate, and eligible to handle magic and the tender souls of living creatures. Thus she was fitted for her life-calling as a woman.
793 The comparable ceremony of maturation for men, when they too
789 were changed from "raw" to mature, compassionate, and strong
562 males for their calling of fatherhood and leadership, was ordination into the Buddhist priesthood. Only those men and women who had undergone their respective rites of maturation were eligible to handle magic. Men's magic gave power, control and could be aggressive. Women's magic was limited to
[688] nurturing purposes, and could never be destructive. The respective areas of magical competence and right were autonomous and rigidly separated on pain of severe sanctions.

844 This view of the role of woman in life and the events of childbirth in the earthly and cosmic scene, had the effect of giving women in childbirth a positive, secure, and relaxed outlook, and an understanding and acceptance of suffering so that they had little fear.

[128] How careers in midwifery, whether professional or amateur were established, and the nature of the specialty and of [illegible] practice are discussed.

128 The understanding of, and the attitudes toward, modern
844 medicine are given along with findings accounting for
846 acceptance or rejection of modern hospital care for parturients.
369 Accepting the changes that were observed in the practices
178 surrounding childbirth proved to be a means of expressing partial withdrawal from the old life of a farmer and a step towards the glitter of urban ways. In the desire to be seen as progressive, the fire rest had been shortened, market products substituted for the consecrated fire, and other urban ways introduced.

000 For persons interested in introducing changes in the

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speeded up with heat to the point of blasts. The strength of the contractions of labor was in direct proportion to the speed of the winds' circulation. The great pushes of the expulsive lom beng "broke down" the sac with the amniotic fluid (nam thun hua: water-that-supports-the-head-of-the-child), and forced out the child, water, and the placenta.

After the child was out, the mother was cold, weak, and exhausted. Her uterus was full of harmful fluids. Heat was needed more than ever not only to warm her but to give the winds "the power and push" to drive out three undesirable birth-waters: "The blood that looks like ordinary blood but is bad,"; the amniotic and abdominal body water (nam khraa: refuse water); and the pale, viscous, repugnant "fish-water" (nam khao plā). Therefore, a hot fire was built, close to which the mother lay (yu fai), turning all sides of her body towards the flame. She bathed in or drank hot or warm boiled water (nam suk: cooked, or ripe, water). She ate safe foods like rice and dried fish,[31] and kluai nam bananas, continued to take alcoholic medicines of the hottest sort, such as Snake Brand, and occasionally might be given cobra or other hot curries to eat. For a first-born, a woman stayed eleven or nine days by the fire (always an odd number), with stays shorter for each successive child, but never less than five days.

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Complications sometimes developed because of inadequate control of the heat. A "headache and a hot body" indicating "stagnation of the blood and the fishy-smelling water," was cured by a heat-producing decoction. Rashes often occurred, causing small boils that might develop into sores. To soothe these, turmeric was painted on. In the most dangerous cases the heat "drove the bad blood to the heart, to the face or belly" where it was recognised by serious swelling, with resulting madness or death. In fact, one man felt that the

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31. The reasons for rejecting fresh fish during pregnancy ("lest a creature of hell be born") would not hold after parturition. Yet fresh fish was rejected then too "as bad for the womb." One suspects that the less odorous dried fish was substituted so that the odor of fresh fish, like air-borne, incompatible food, would not affect adversely the "fish-smelling" post-partum discharge (nam khao plā). In Hauck's list of foods "bad for mother during the post-partum rest," the reasons are apparent: Sour tastes did not dry out the body, but built up water; egg was too cooling; jackfruit brought in wind; glutinous rice and the sugar of sweets "wet the uterus;" fruits did not give strength and were excessively cooling (cf. Hauck, 1959:15).

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000 in Bang Chan tried to carry on the old rites.

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• 372 The Cone of Wood

When a child was conceived out of wedlock, the first problem raised was, "Who will build the wood pile?" The actual father had to come forward and identify himself, for he and no one else could perform this duty. A child could not be born without the father giving this assistance.

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372 This cone of wood represented a "womb" towards which a father actively played out his role. His child was in it. While building it, his behavior affected the child, just as his wife's behavior acted on the child in her womb. If the pile were incomplete before the onset of labor or gave out before the fire-rest was terminated, the child would "never finish any task in its life." The very manifestation of industriousness involved in collecting the wood, though, made the unborn child industrious. Gathering a quantity of wood for this big pile was not easy. Old houses had plenty of wood, for they stood in thick groves, but new houses sometimes stood bare and stark in the fields. He placed spiny Indian jujube or Chinese date (phutsǎ) and Manila tamarind (ma khām thēt) all over the outside to protect [824] this "womb" from invasion by malevolent spirits. Thus he also protected his wife's womb. Sakae wood was preferred because it was smokeless. Collecting a mixture of woods was easier, but then the fire smoked. Mixed or all sakae, whichever the constitution of the pile for a woman's first confinement set the pattern for all her later ones.

At the onset of labor, the father had to open the way for his child to come out of the womb, so the pile was tipped over in a direction paralleling the position of the Great Snake. This astrological orientation was exactly that of the woman in labor. Unless the mother's head and the apex of the fallen wood pile coincided with the direction of the head of the Snake, with the open end of womb and cone below, "with and not against the lie of the snake's scales," the child would have to struggle against these scales as he came out. By tipping the cone of wood properly the father helped his child to an easy exit.

The thorns protected the womb and the baby inside from all evil spirits during the months of pregnancy. With the onset of labor, the holy cord which surrounded the mother took over this function, and kept away such dangerous spirits as phi krasy and, if the baby died at birth, the violent New Baby Ghost (cf. Textor:261).

Even after the child was out, the pile of wood was still a drying womb to be treated carefully. It was also the wood for a consecrated fire. To drop a piece of this wood carelessly both injured and desecrated. If this happened a disease of the eyes "sang," came at once for which no male medical powers had any remedy. The only cure was in women's hands, that essence of maternity, "a drop of mother's milk--any mother's." The larger implications of this linking of fire and maternity are dealt with in the next section.

The Fire of Maturity

In the events surrounding the birth of the child, the significant step for the woman personally was the post-partum rest period by the fire (yū fai). Far more was at stake than just drying the uterus. The fire rest was one of the series of rites of the life-cycle which marked the course of an individual from birth to death. The others were the cutting of the umbilical cord, first head shaving, top-knot tonsure, ordination (for men), marriage, and cremation. Through the consecrated fire a woman formally achieved full maturity: she became suk (cooked, ripe, mature). Maturity did not come just by bearing a child. The fire brought about the transformation.[46]

How was mature womanhood viewed? What was the essential female role and office? Bang Chan saw a woman as one who "feeds and lengthens lives." As the custodian of growth she was, first, the guardian of the vital, essential khwan soul, and especially of the immature, flighty khwan of growing persons.

Secondly, a woman was a donor of nourishment (liang).[47] Her primary responsibility was to nurture children and other tender beings. She nourished the fetus with her blood. After

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46. "The fiery element digests what is eaten or drunk...and cooks the body and gives it its beauty of complexion. And the body thus cooked is kept free from decay" (Warren:157-158).

47. All the deities "concerned with the welfare of our bodies and our khwan" were maternal (mae), e.g. Rice, Water, Earth, "Mother-Goddess" (Mae Sū), and several Mother-Princesses (Chao Mae). Fire, and maybe wind, were both female (mae) and male (phra) (Textor:485). To these deities, "higher" than ordinary spirits, Bang Chan "owed more."

Only when the youngster was satiated did she gobble the remainder.[50] Parents often commented that girls in general were obedient and good, but boys were not. Everyone spoke, however, of exceptions. The capacity to play the female role grew with the child. It was not completed with the physiological maturity of first menstruation but only with ritual maturity.

The rituals to fit a woman for her office, described as "directly related to the welfare of the child," had 4 specific purposes. They perfected her as a compassionate being; restored and strengthened her body; improved her capacities as a nourisher; and strengthened her own kwan. The key to each of these aims was the holy fire.[51] Because actions taken by the fire were immediately and permanently effective, every effort was made to induce auspicious happenings. Words spoken by the fire had compelling effect so even ordinary speech became magical. Speaking of the fire's hotness so raised its heat that a mother was burned. For this reason, uninformed or careless visitors like children or foreigners were a danger.

According to Buddhist thinking, suffering developed compassion. Through the discomfort of pregnancy, followed by the anguish of childbirth and the heat of the fire, a woman became compassionate and so achieved the guide-line for moral behavior. Then a woman was sure to be touched with pity for the younger or less fortunate. One teacher despite the inconvenience went home twice a day from school to nurse her new baby because she "pitied" him too much to hire a wet-nurse. It was "pitiful" to see a child at another woman's breast for it implied that its mother was either unwilling or unable to nurse it. Thus, babies were rarely nursed by others than their own mothers.

The fire also strengthened a woman by ridding her of bad blood and foul fluids. Wind and fire, the 2 spirit guardians of the elements necessary to the occasion, were invoked to assist in the drying of the uterus. In addition, strengthening

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50. Boys too fed their younger siblings but their purpose was a power-play: "to assure obedience in the future" (cf. Hanks and Phillips:548).

51. This fire was kept entirely separate from the one for cooking and boiling of water. It was ritually lit and ritually extinguished at the end of the fire-rest.

In addition, strengthening
846 foods like rice and fish, the staples for stout farmers,
262 were stressed. Fruit, "which gave no strength," and vegetables (except for the nursing curry mentioned below) were avoided.

846 The holy fire also transformed a woman into a better
372 nourisher. It gave her new, lasting beneficial nursing
827 habits. As one man explained, "the very nature of water
262 is changed by boiling over a fire. It becomes ausk (ripe)." Similarly, a woman's body, her very nature, was permanently changed to ausk by the fire's heating. The fire, in fact, made ausk all the food she ate beside it. Since this food was turned into milk, her breast milk became ausk and so more nourishing, and did not disturb elements.[52] "Food eaten while lying by the fire, when eaten later on (during lactation) by the mother, does not cause diarrhea in the baby." Jackfruit ordinarily caused wind-trouble during lactation, but one woman ate it during the fire-rest, and at once "got used to it, so she could eat it all the time." To make themselves better nourishers, some women spoke of the desirability of "eating a bit of every kind of food." The "nursing curry" (kaeng liang) was a mixture of vegetables.

846 Finally, the consecrated fire strengthened a woman's
372 own khuan. She could better withstand convulsion if
774 attacked by a spirit.[53] She was able thereby to handle
[796] a khuan even without the special magic that existed for it.

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[252] 52. To be nourishing even the daily rice had to be made ausk by boiling (Amuman Rajadhon:77). It may be that no food was considered nourishing unless ausk, either naturally (like ripe fruit) or by cooking.

[787] 53. "...when 'involuntarily' entered by ghosts...maidens in the 17-21 age bracket tend to convulse more violently than do women of more advanced years"(Textor:486). "Maidens" were presumably not married and so not ausk.

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156 (riak khwan). Theirs was an augmented personal potency[55] in nurture not unlike the mana so widespread in the Asian-Pacific area.[56] The best midwives were liang dī, though not all liang dī were midwives. This societal peak was not an unattainable ideal. In the community, certain women were pointed out as liang dī and some of them recognized in themselves the validity of this title.

562 The association of rice, motherhood, and khwan now stands
774 clear. Rice made suk by cooking over a fire, was the essential
776 food not only for the body but for the khwan. Growth and life
262 depended on the nourished khwan. Rice came from a maternal figure, the Rice Goddess, Mae Phosop (cf. J.R. Hanks, 1960). Human mothers, too, when made suk, gave suk nourishment: the milk of the breast was merely transformed rice. Whenever rice was eaten throughout human adulthood, the Rice Mother continued her nourishment, for in each grain was a bit of her khwan, nourishing to the human khwan. The rice-bowl and ladle, used in many a ceremony, stood for the maternal care given a human khwan, and by extension, personal care throughout life. Whenever the rice bowl with offerings (khwan khao: soul-[of]-rice) was presented by a parturient or by a sick person, loving care comparable to maternal care was being requested.

182 The idea of re-birth, of a fresh start within the pure
885 area encircled by the holy cord, with auspicious words and
846 consecrated fire, was deep in every life-cycle rite. The
562 particular circumstance of the fire of parturition was a forthright cooking to bring out and increase a woman's
372 essential femaleness, to transform her from a youthful, partial giver into a complete, mature doner of nourishment. Such was the satisfaction of women in this female role that many said they would like to be reborn as women. Few wanted

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55. Anuman Rajadhon (p. 134) reports that in India a newborn girl needed no ritual paraphernalia to keep away spirits because "her sex...is a protection in itself, and spirits cannot come to bother her." This was close to Bang Chan's idea of female potency.

56. Cf. "Mana" (E.R.E. VIII:378) for a quick run-down on a definition of mana.

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to be reborn as men. All women were eager to undergo the post-partum fire at least once. After that modifications might be entertained.[57] Whether the baby lived or died was not pertinent, for the benefits of the fire were for the mother.

Comparison of Male and Female Maturation Rites

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The parallel ritual that fitted men to perform their masculine role was ordination into the Buddhist priesthood. The well-documented Buddhist ends should not be permitted to eclipse this other personal goal. Just as the fire prepared a woman for motherhood, so ordination changed an immature youth into a man ready for marriage and fatherhood. He too was transformed from raw (dib) to ripe (suk). Men gained compassion through denial and suffering. Since their natures were seen as hard (khaeng), strong, bent on gain, influence, and power, possibly destructive and concupiscent, the severest deprivations were invoked: the renouncement of the gratifications of sex and food. Of the 2, the deprivation of food involved the greatest break with previous habits, for since babyhood, food had been a symbol of maternal care. Hence, a man was cast on his own. His only refuge and support was the Buddha, the law, and the Brotherhood. This self-denial induced the suffering that, coupled with knowledge gained from study of the scriptures, led to compassion. The suffering in no way

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57. The fire-rest though desirable was not obligatory. In 1865, Bradley said it could be "dispensed with in times of civil commotion, for fear of the enemy" and "no damages whatever were suffered whatever to mother or child" (p.79). Like other life cycle rites it was postponed if not convenient (sadwak). Also in times of peace, "a few mothers here and there cannot lie by the fire," and a few say, "they will not" (ibid:p.79). Bang Chan would accept this viewpoint freely as reflecting an individual, constitutional set of elements, or as an autonomous decision of an individual. The woman would never feel herself as competent as a ritually mature person though.

Chapter VII

ATTITUDES TOWARD MODERN MEDICINE AND MIDWIFERY

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Modern and traditional medicine appeared to Bang Chan to have much in common. Both subscribed to a belief in disruptive intrusions. In typhoid and cholera, the old scheme postulated intrusions of fire and earth. Boils involved a spirit attack or excess of fire. For these same disorders, new medicine spoke instead of virus or bacterial infection. Such concepts as nutritional deficiencies, insect transmission, and pollution, however, were alien to the old views as disease agents.

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Modern medicines paralleled the old decoctions. Antibiotics, ointments, or pain-pills were appreciated for their efficacy, but evoked no surprise, for every plant in the world was said to have some therapeutic value. Injections were similar to the sub-cutaneous magical protective needle.

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"Old" medicine did not feel threatened because people were not convinced that the modern was better. The 2 systems were viewed as different, each having its own specialties. The difference was sometimes phrased as "Old medicine cares for old ailments, modern medicine for new ones." Spirit possession and khun attack, for instance, were old ailments; poliomyelitis, gonorrhea, and maybe diphtheria, new (J.R. Hanks, 1955:155-195). It was sometimes better not to claim competence outside these customary lines. One mō said he could cure gonorrhea, but the young men preferred a city doctor. Sometimes, though, one could not be sure what was a new disease.

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Another phrasing of the proper place for modern medicine was that because of varying "habit," differing social stations required differing medical techniques. "Modern medicine is only good for delicate city people or other kinds of farmers, but does not give enough strength for rice-farmers." The orchardists below Bangkok who "had the habit of eating a lot of fruit," and the teachers and traders of Bang Chan (who went to the second class practitioners, and occasionally to modern doctors) were assumed to have different physical needs than farmers. The post-partum fire was clung to as strength-making: "women are weak if no fire." The hot ashes chamber, introduced from Bangkok, was for the most part used by non-farm women.

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Chapter VIII

CHANGES

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In studying change in the customs surrounding childbirth in Bang Chan, we have D.B. Bradley's description of birth in Bankok in 1865 as a base-line on which to project our findings. Since most of the population of Bang Chan (Thai, with a few Laotians, Mon, Muslims, and Chinese) stems from Bangkok, we may reasonably assume that the parallels derive from a true historical connection. Bradley's description fitted Bang Chan as if written today:

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> "Siamese theory in regard to the part which external and internal fire plays in the functions of life and health is made to work powerfully...There is, at such times, a diminution of heat in the body, and consequent liability to stagnation of the blood, which, if not guarded against by fire, will leave the uterus flabby and enlarged, bad humors in circulation, a consequent weak state of the stomach, resulting in the secretion of too little milk, and that of a bad quality for the child, all of which will be likely to be followed by a host of other fearful maladies to both mother and child...[Thus a woman lies by the fire]... exposing all parts of her body, and more particularly her abdomen, to that drying process, so that the uterus shall be forced to shrink up quickly to its normal dimensions, and the sanguineous streams which had been diverted to support the child before birth, shall, by fire, be driven backward to their more usual limitations, all which is...a sine qua non to a sound constitution and good health in the future..." (Bangkok Calendar, 1865:78-84).

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Bradley showed that some behavior one might call "change" today was a recognized alternative in 1865. For instance, in Bang Chan a few women "are made too unhappy (klum) by the fire so cannot use it. They should take extra amounts of pickled medicine" (yā dɔɔng). Bradley wrote, "a few delicate females...who cannot endure [this] usual treatment, are compelled, against all their ...fears of the consequences, and all the importunities of their

friends to say positively that they cannot and will not endure it. For such, some other course has to be taken by the use of "...medicines" (p. 81).[74]

The most noticeable modification in the customs of childbirth was the shortened fire-rest which had shifted from 29 or so days, to 9 to 15 or less; this was practiced by everyone.[75] Another conspicuous change adopted by a few dozen persons was the substitution for the open fire of a heat-making contrivance, in particular the hot-ashes or charcoal burning container (chamber or fire-box: fai chut) and the hot water bottle. (The hot brick and wrapped pot of hot salt were probably old alternatives.) New, of course, were the occasional utilization of the Minburi Health Center; the second class doctors; and, somewhat more generally, the novelties of the market, such as flowered net-frames, mits, shirts, pillowcases, and pacifiers. There were a few other changes noted.

Who took up the innovations? First, they were women who had already successfully borne a child, undergone a full fire-rest, and were bearing their second or later children. Being already ritually mature (nuk) and of proven competence in childbearing, they had no reason to fear a change and nothing to lose. Age and experience gave them the self-confidence, authority, and interest to ponder their experience and decide on ways to increase their effectiveness and their comfort. They had the right to do so because of the fundamental autonomy of the individual. Strong-minded old ladies might criticise the substitution of the hot-ashes container for the fire, feeling it was not hot enough to do the job, but they never questioned the woman's right to do so. The least likely to adopt

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74. On the other hand, Bradley (pp. 82-83) was puzzled why his success in saving the life of so revered a personage as the Queen by taking her off the fire, a move so thoroughly approved by the King, did not cause universal abandonment of the fire-rest. He was not aware that many a mō did the same (with the possible exception of the sponging with tepid water), that as a mō-with-a-particular-specialty he could do anything he wanted but no one would copy it without personal formal authorization, and that he was up against the deeply-rooted rite of female maturation concerning which even royalty had no authority (Bangkok Calendar, 1871:107-109).

75. We have no data on whether this shortening process set in in the 1930's, or after World War II in the late 1940's. The month-long rest was universal in the 1920's.

178 a new way was a woman bearing her first child because she
184 was not yet ritually matured. This she wanted to be.
Moreover, her self-interest led her to try to profit as
•372 much as possible from the experience of elders by first
846 following the old way. By incorporating the experience
885 of successful child-bearers into her own and the baby's
life and by asking them to initiate actions auspiciously,
she augmented by that much her own competence, and laid
the groundwork for her future progress. Self-responsibility engendered respect for elders. Thus there was no split between old and young over innovations. Experience gave grounds both for conservatism and for changing, but at different age levels.

178 Secondly, changes were adopted by the rich who,
184 spending their money rather conspicuously, sought to main-
556 tain and enhance their social position. Their wealth
and position were in themselves unquestioned as signs of merit earned in another incarnation.

178 The changes being introduced to Bang Chan were of two
554 kinds: first the prestigeful, and second, those giving no increment of esteem, i.e. idiosyncratic changes of taste or convenience; or those reflecting individual circumstances. The prestigeful innovations were oriented towards the use of market novelties, modern medical care, urban standards of cleanliness and beauty, and other ways termed "progressive" associated with the city of Bangkok, cynosure of the eyes of the rich. These values were leading certain families away from their original occupation of farming, into the fields of teaching, trading, carpentering, cottage-industry, etc. Since these new occupations brought in steady cash and large land holders, too, had a good income, an association was found of
372 wealth, prestige, urban interests, and innovation. Com-
846 ment on the hot ashes container (<u>fai chut</u>) indicated that
178 it was a strong symbol of prestige and progress. To use it was "to get away from ignorance and the old way of doing things." It was "cleaner, not hot or ugly, and more convenient." One teacher took it up after reading an advertisement in the newspapers that described glowingly its more efficient healing effect. On the other hand, one woman abandoned the <u>fai chut</u> because "it was not hot enough to rid her of stiff muscles," so she went back to the use of the fire. "It is all right for rich Bangkok ladies who want to avoid a scar, but it does not give
177 enough strength for a farmer." She had no urban preten-
178 sions. Also in this prestigeful aggregate, observed here
278 and there, were the market novelties mentioned above:
854 bed, mat, and mosquito net instead of the plank-bed; kits of medicine from the Chinese pharmacist instead of the old

844 178 122 412 this rust is believed to cause tetanus--and they are unsuitable for the ritual objective at the moment of cutting. It will be remembered that cutting the cord on a rhizome of phlai or soil with a bamboo sliver from the housepost guarantees that a child will not roam away from home. Could the bamboo sliver be dipped in "heating" alcohol, or passed over the flame of a holy fire? Could the old family kitchen-knife--long associated with the household--be substituted and dipped in the beneficial heat of boiling water? Such a knife once was substituted on the winnowing tray. Might the phlai or soil be covered with a boiled, clean, old cloth? If modern science succeeds in coming up with an acceptable substitute, one sees the possibility of a very small change making a big difference in the amount of tetanus poisoning observed (Hauck, 1956:41). One should then ask the midwives to watch as to whether the new method reduced the infection called "death because of a red or green face and clenched fists."

262 In diet "the concept that a good choice of food is important to the health of both mother and child" (Hauck, 1959:2) was very much shared by modern science and by traditional ideas but the basis of choice was entirely different.[77] Modern science has ascertained that certain foods are [261] beneficial because of certain nutrients, while old beliefs have set up certain foods as desirable because of properties of heating, cooling, compatibilities with the elements, etc. The nature of these properties should be collected and listed. If dietary deficiencies in Bang Chan are noted, the foods that combine the needed beneficial qualities in both systems should be stressed. A hot-tasting tonic (yā) with appropriate dietary supplements, to be taken daily during pregnancy, and another kind during the post-partum period, might be acceptable. The period of the fire-rest is the best 372 place to initiate dietary changes for whatever is done by 846 the fire becomes a habit beneficial to mother and child. The use of boiled water should be encouraged as "making for [illegible]gth." Again, disturbance of customs is minimized, and the presence or absence of "increased strength" and healthiness can be observed experientially.

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77. Hauck felt the concept was lacking, but it appears only that the grounds of choice were different.

The Muslim khwan khao contained 7 items"--a young (or ripe) coconut with its water; thread or "a skein of yarn"(used not to tie in the khwan but "for the teacher"); 7 pieces or areca nut; 7 betel pepper leaves; one "heavy" (15 gram) yellow wax candle; one "bag" of incense; rice; and 30 baht in money.[78] The khwan khao was not offered with the idea of its reaching phra In (Indra) ultimately, but rather the local princely spirits of the land, chao thi, chao thān, and Mae Thoranī (Mother Earth). It was waved 3 times by the midwife over the abdomen of the woman in labor with the prayer: "Spirits of the land, Mother Earth, may the delivery be easy!" The khwan khao was then placed at the mother's head. The woodpile was knocked over so as to point to Mecca, which was west, a direction avoided by the Buddhists. "When nearly ready to deliver, a Muslim midwife turns the mother's face in the direction where the family's hens hatch their chicks. If they have no chicken, then in any direction."[79] If delivery were slow, a Buddhist nō was called to "shift the mother to new places" until the baby came out.

Muslim women lay post-partum by a fire for the usual physiological reasons. In making up the fireplace, instead of a cluster of incense, flowers, and a candle, this purely Hindu-Brahman-Buddhist trio, they sprinkled salt "to keep away evil spirits" on the dirt at the corners. Salt, oil, or alcohol was spewed over the fire and the woman's body, or only magic was recited, "to control the poison of the fire." "Of these, salt is best," said a Muslim midwife, but "whichever a midwife used first has to be continued for the rest of her life as her way of doing things, because the habit has been started that way." The Muslim magic for controlling the fire was "ōm ming ōm fun ōm fai sawā hai." "So be it, stove, rocks (or mountains), fire, be cool, may a blessing rest to you," though "ōm" is the Pali-Buddhist "mystical word." The placenta was not put in a pot beside the fire, but was washed by the midwife several times until perfectly clean, then was mixed with salt and buried in the dirt directly under the fire. When the fire was finally destroyed, the placenta was dug up, washed again, and immediately buried (not in a pot), with the

78. There was some evidence that the thread and incense were included only when a Muslim midwife was delivering a Buddhist woman.

79. To the Muslims this was an act of imitative magic. The Buddhists saw the action of a setting hen as a quick source of information for the parturient's orientation. The hen always avoided the direction of the phī luang (Textor:378).

births, until with the seventh child it might be dispensed with altogether without harm. In Bang Chan women who observed (2)juu (1)faj rested for an odd number of days, from 5 to 15 in this series. Seven or 9 days was most common. An odd number of days was considered good; an even number, bad. A wood fire was customary, although in 2 instances a charcoal brazier was used. One woman lay near a charcoal brazier and used a hot ashes chamber[1] also. With one exception (a non-Thai), even those who did not lie by the fire, but who used the hot ashes chamber, rested an odd number of days.

The traditional ideas on which the custom of lying by the fire was based were described in the Bangkok Calendar (Bradley, 1865):

> "The Siamese theory in regard to the part, which external and internal fire plays in the functions of life and health, is made to work powerfully in these circumstances. It teaches that there is, at such times, a diminution of heat in the body, and consequent liability to stagnation of the blood, which if not guarded against by fire, will leave the uterus flabby and enlarged, bad humors in the circulation, a consequent weak state of the stomach, resulting in the secretion of too little milk, and that of a bad quality for the child, all of which will be likely to be followed by a host of other fearful maladies to both mother and child."

The author, however, attributed deficiency in milk production to the practice of lying by the fire:

> "Now it is very remarkable that these last sequences, which are guarded against at so much expense of ease and comfort by the custom, are postively and directly brought about by following it. The mothers have but little milk for their babes during the month, and that of a poor quality. Consequently the attendant nurses have to feed them from the hour of their birth with honey, rice-water, and the pulp of soft bananas. This is their almost entire living for the first two or three days, and a large portion of it during the first month."

Of the 5 women we interviewed who did not lie by the fire, 3 used a hot ashes chamber regularly throughout the postpartum rest period, one used it occasionally, and one used both the hot ashes chamber and a hot water bottle. This latter woman

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1. A small metal box in which sticks of fuel were burned. The box was wrapped in cloth and placed on the mother's abdomen.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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On the other hand, there are scores of items that have to be bought for daily consumption. These are: (a) Food -- fish, fish sauce, shrimp paste, meat, coconut, onions, garlic, dried chili, curry essence, limes, tamarind, palm sugar, white sugar, salt, and cookies: (b) Stimulant -- dried areca, betel, lime, tobacco, tobacco binder, and liquor; (c) Clothing; (d) Medicine; (e) Soap; (f) Fuel -- Kerosine, matches, charcoal, and fire wood. The list includes only standard items appearing on our check list. Actually, there are more of such items as coffee, tea, lemonade, coca-cola, and pepsi-cola. Articles that are bought but do not appear on the check list for ordinary household expenses for certain technical reasons which will be discussed in the section on consumption later in this chapter are building materials, machinery, farm equipment, furniture and household utensils.

The Operator's Remuneration and Measures of Success

From almost the beginning of the study of farm management in the United States, much effort has been given to measuring the success of farming businesses, or of farm-family undertakings or enterprises, and then of correlating various factors with these, such as size of business, yields per acre or per animal, or work-efficiency measured perhaps as crop acres per man or per horse or per tractor, with a view to discovering some general farm management principles or rules for a farmer or farm family to follow in becoming more successful. Black, Clawson, Sayre and Wilcox give the

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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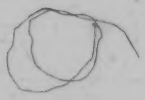

243
291
511 needs at least two work suits in each rice season, one during the field preparation and another during the harvesting season.

372
226
511 Kerosine is used every day for lighting purposes. We do not include in this category kerosine which is used in the farm work; but that used with the pressure lamp in fishing by spearing during the night is included in the ordinary household expenses, for we do not consider fishing as a farm enterprise but as a routine activity participated in by all Bangchan residents, farmers and non-farmers alike.

431
476
796
511 Contributions to neighbors is a necessary item of expense in the village. These are cash gifts made by invited guests to the sponsor of such rituals as ordination, cremation, marriage, topnotch-cutting, and teacher worship. [792] [764] [535] These rituals usually take place during the dry season following harvesting when cash is abundant in the village and are always followed by feasts, not uncommonly in a series of two or three days. Since all these rituals necessitate the participation of the priests, they have to be arranged in consultation with the temple to avoid conflicting schedules. Although few rituals have been noted to be in conflict with one another, usually they are spread throughout the dry season and most people are able to attend rituals to which they are invited. In cases where they cannot attend in person, they are obliged by conventional requirement to send in their cash contributions. The standard cash contribution is 5 - 10 baht. Usually, a